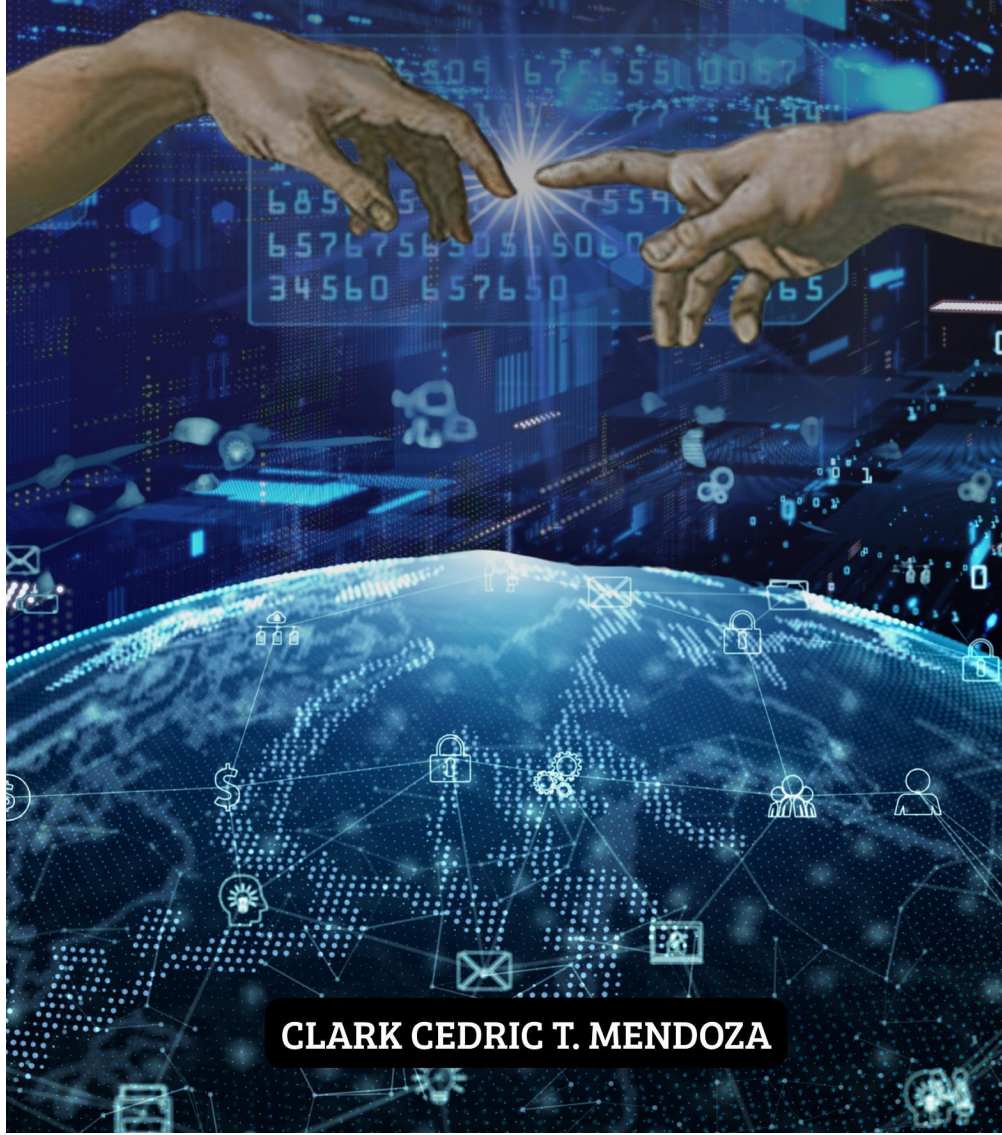


WHEN FAITH GOES ONLINE



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When Faith Goes Online

Digital Discipleship, Communicating Christ in our World Today

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Preface

This book is born at these moments, moments of silence, noise, prayer, questions, and encounters with God in my ordinary day-to-day life. As a young Pauline seminarian, and part of this generation that lives both online and offline, I find myself asking “*where is God ? Where can I find God? How can I find God?*”

The reflections in this book are not perfect answers but honest I attempt to see, to listen, and to respond. This is written from my real experiences, walking through the streets of Marikina, praying in Quiapo, observing the realities of our country, and engaging in the fast-moving world of social media. In all these, I realized that our faith is not just within the walls of the Church. It lives, moves, and speaks wherever we are, even in digital spaces.

This work of mine is not just for my compliance, but also for myself to grow more and develop what is hidden within me, it is my response to the call of our time to bring the Gospel into the digital world. As communicators of Christ, we are invited not only to consume content, but to create meaning, to witness truth, and to reflect Christ himself in every platform we enter. May this book serve not only as a collection of reflections of mine, but as an invitation to pause, to reflect, and to rediscover God’s presence in your own everyday life.

The Flood Control Projects and the Flood of Mercy

11-26-2025

Christ the King

Christ, the King of the Universe does not rule through power alone. He reigns through justice, responsibility, and mercy — especially in times when us humans need Him the most, He does not place our lives at risk. It's been a long time since we first heard in the news about the controversial issue of “flood control projects.” This issue of our so-called “ghost flood control projects” has been affecting us not only in terms of flood, but in many ways. It continuously affects our daily lives in ways that we are not aware of. Therefore...

“dapat may managot, dapat may panagutin.”

Let's Not Wait Any Longer...

Every human life has dignity and must be protected. When these public projects fail, the marginalized and the vulnerable suffer first. Flooding destroys homes, livelihoods, and peace of mind. Flooding is not only a natural problem. It becomes a social issue when negligence, corruption, and lack of responsibility place people's lives at risk, in this matter accountability is not optional — it is a moral duty. Let's do not wait any longer for us to experience this negligence on flood control projects.

My family and I live in Marikina City, which is a flood-prone area. In 2020, when Typhoon Ulysses struck our country, the Marikina River overflowed and flooded many parts of the city and nearby towns such as Rizal, Antipolo, and Cainta. We were blessed not to evacuate, but what about others? Many families lost much because of this typhoon.

Our Stand

Our Church as the conscience of our government — reminded us that they must serve for the

common good — for the good of all. We must not wait for more families to suffer before we speak and act. True service requires transparency, responsibility, and good governance, especially from those entrusted with public authority. Resiliency is not good when what is just is not being served.

Our Church is calling for action. Last Saturday, November 22, we went to Dasmariñas grandstand to attend the diocesan celebration of Christ the King, integrated with a prayer rally calling for accountability in flood control projects. The theme “Simbahang Caviteño: May Pananagutan, May Pananagutin.” It expressed the truth that the Church does not remain silent when human dignity is being threatened.

Call to Action

Together as one with the whole Diocese of Imus, the Saint Paul Seminary (Silang Community of Society of Saint Paul) joined the faithful in this celebration. The program includes praying the Holy Rosary, Ecumenical Prayer for our nation and leaders, Eucharistic celebration, sentimental talks, moments of reflection, and other performances. It ended with solemn Eucharistic procession, adoration, and benediction — reminding us that Christ the King — King of Kings is not only king of heaven, but heaven and earth (including of our nation).

Christ’s kingship is not based on manipulation of power or control. He reigns through truth, way, life. His kingdom challenges all leaders to serve with justice, service, and love — to protect life, not to endanger it. From this celebration of Christ the King and prayer rally — call to action for our government, I went home with this acronym in my mind “GTA”, not Grand Theft Auto but my...

“GTA” stands for Good Governance, Transparency, and Accountability.

Today You Will Be With Me

In the Gospel proclaimed on last Christ the King Sunday, we heard in the Gospel, Dimas, the good thief, cried out “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” and Jesus replied, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

In this moment, Dimas experienced a flood of mercy from our Lord. This mercy continues to flow on us today, we often call this the divine mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been flowing to us ever since, touching our hearts, reminding us that God will never

forsake us, promise that we will also come and live into paradise with Him, all of this because of God's overflowing mercy to us, He loved us unconditionally. It reminds us that Christ the King is also Christ the Merciful.

His mercy does not excuse injustice, but it calls for conversion of heart.

Like Dimas, we are just a human being “mahinang nilalang lamang” — just a weak creature and in need of God's mercy. The same mercy offered to Dimas and to those who failed, who sins, who have shortcomings, and to those responsible for this ghost flood control projects—and to all dishonest projects.

Like Dimas, may they also choose to repent, choose what is truth, and choose to change their lives. May those accountable for this controversy were flooded with their own conscience. If they choose it, justice and mercy are not opposites, in the Kingdom of Christ, they walk together.

The flood of mercy also calls us, the faithful, to act —our faith must shape our choices, our voices, and our actions. To show mercy to one another, to choose love over hatred, responsibility over silence, and hope over fear. We are invited to forgive and ask for forgiveness, but also to demand what is right. To always be open and give a chance for development and transformation. Ultimately, for all of us to be one together, to live in God's kingdom together. In the Kingship of Christ, we find a vision of society where leaders are accountable, projects serve the people, and the dignity of every person is protected. This is the kind of kingdom we pray for every time we say:

“Thy kingdom come.”

May it be always Christ in our hearts, in our conscience, and in our nation.

Christus Vincit! Christus Regnat! Christus Imperat!

The Manger in the Midst of Christmas Rush

12-11-2025

Traffic in Marcos Highway

Marcos Highway, also known as Marikina-Infanta Highway and Marilaque Highway (which stands for Marikina, Rizal, Laguna, and Quezon), is one of the national roads and major road networks in Metro Manila. It is known as being a gateway connecting the cities of Marikina and Pasig to the eastern side of the provinces of Rizal and Quezon. Our house in Marikina is just walking distance to Marcos Highway. This highway begins near Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City and passes through some of the Barangays of Marikina, such as the Industrial Valley Complex, Calumpang, and San Roque where our house is located. It continues toward Cainta and Antipolo. As you go further, you will pass through a beautiful scenic mountain road heading toward Infanta, Quezon.

As one who lives near here, Marcos Highway is very significant for me, it serves as a transportation corridor for many commuters - workers, students. It made the transportation accessible and easy for us. It also has many commercial establishments for our needs, along this highway you will find SM Marikina, Ayala Malls Feliz, Robinson Metro East, Sta. Lucia, and SM Masinag, there are also a lot of fast food chains, restaurants, business centers, terminals, and many more. I made a lot of memories here, how I wish I could go back to it.

Last weekend, the first weekend of December, the Marcos Highway looked like a big parking lot due to many stranded cars. When the MMDA was asked for an explanation they said it was due to the volume of cars, no vehicular or any accidents, no LRT malfunctions, no road reblocking, just because of the volume of cars. I think if I'm just around home this time, I would be another one of those who added to this traffic so thank God.

This Christmas

It's only the first weekend of December and many people are already losing their patience in

the midst of the heavy traffic of the Christmas rush. People are outside of their houses, doing busy things, making themselves busy, getting their schedules fully booked. Many were disturbed by side to side Christmas sales, celebrations, parties, and other gatherings that result in a traffic mayhem. These situations made me reflect on our time compared to what happened years ago. I couldn't help but ask myself, is this really what Christmas looks like? Is this similar to what happened in Bethlehem when Christ was born?

In the midst of this chaos, the Church invites us to slow down our lives and make a space for the coming of our savior, to prepare ourselves, our hearts to welcome the Emmanuel. Reserve a room for the Holy Family - to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. That in the middle of our being "aligaga" this season, we may dispose of ourselves and make our attention focus on the one who is born that we may also rest in his loving manger as the Gospel tells us when Jesus said to the crowds, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." It is the invitation of Jesus for us to rest. There's nothing wrong in doing nothing, in just being relaxed, in being idle, it is part of our life.

The Manger

The manger teaches us a lesson, Jesus chose to be born not in comfort, but in the lowly one, quiet, hidden, and unnoticed. And maybe the same is happening today. Even in the noisy chaos of Marcos Highway traffic, the manger can still appear in the presence of each of us by the simple act of slowing down and being present ourselves to Jesus. Marcos Highway reminds us that Christmas is not found in the rush, but in the small, humble spaces where love makes room and sometimes, the real manger is not in Bethlehem, but inside us waiting to be cleared of traffic so Christ can enter.

The Quiapo Church, Quiapo, Manila

1-9-2026

Anamnesis

For me, Quiapo is not just a place I visit regularly. It becomes a part of my life-long journey. On June 9, 2025, a few days before my entrance to Saint Paul Seminary, aside from errands for my camera lens, together with Prince, we went through Quiapo Church and “humalik sa Nazareno,” we thank the Lord for being accepted in the seminary and we ask guidance for this formation year.

On October 17, 2025, right after our semestral break, I returned back to Quiapo Church with JJ. We attended Mass. This time, I thanked the Lord for the semester that we had finished. I also prayed that the Lord would still allow me to return for the next semester, which really comes true. By grace, that prayer was answered. I am still here, still surviving.

December 26, 2025 — Quiapo Day, the last Friday of the year. I found myself again in Quiapo, but this time the line for “pahalik” was too long, so I did not try to fall in line. I did not see the Nazareno up close. But as I walked around the Plaza Miranda, I whispered my prayers of thanksgiving for all the blessings I received throughout the year, and continuously asking for guidance and protection for this year 2026.

This day also taught me something simple, being close to God is not always about being near in distance, but being able to feel and embrace his presence — anywhere and anytime. I promised that this year I would come back to see the Poong Jesus Nazareno again in His Basilica.

Quiapo? Quiapo? Quiapo?

What is so special about Quiapo? What mystery is there in Quiapo? Why do people keep coming to Quiapo? What is it about Quiapo that stays with you?

While looking at my Instagram archives, I could no longer count nor even remember all the times I have been to Quiapo, but what I can assure you is that every time I am there, whenever I'm at Quiapo I find comfort, and peace amidst the chaotic Manila.

Whether I come by bike, on a spontaneous trip, on a pilgrimage, for food trip, or simply just passing time, Quiapo is always there. Despite the noise, the crowd, the chaos, and the polluted Manila air, Quiapo remains a place full of hope. It is a place where people bring their dreams and prayers to the Nazareno.

The Poong Jesus Nazareno

Upon reflecting on my entrusted Quiapo moments, I found myself looking again and again at the image of Poong Jesus Nazareno —sweet yet suffering. We heard in the Gospel today:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” (John 3:16)

and the image of Nazareno was the perfect portrait of how God so loved the World, that He sent our Poong Jesus Nazareno to us.

God did not love us from far away.

He chose to walk with us.

He chose to suffer with us.

He chose to carry the Cross for us.

This is why the image is close to the people.

This is why many are devoted to the Nazareno.

This is why Quiapo is always full, especially on Fridays.

How Quiapo Goes Beyond a Place

“Ang byaheng Quiapo, ay biyaheng langit, at ito ang tunay nating tahanan.”

One detail about the Nazareno often speaks to me.

Despite the weight of the Cross, He is not looking down.

He is looking up.

He is looking toward heaven.

The Poong Nazareno is telling us — Come! Take up Your Cross and Follow Me!

The Cross

The Cross was once a sign of shame, but in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ — the Cross became the sign of our salvation.

Many times, we are afraid of our own crosses.

They feel heavy.

They are hard to carry.

Life becomes difficult.

But the Cross is not meant to stop us.

The Cross is meant to lead us.

The Cross becomes our path.

The Cross becomes our way to heaven.

The Cross calls us not only to suffer or to struggle, but to love.

The image of the Nazareno shows us the perfect example of love that we must have.

It reminds us that our personal burdens, our struggles, our weaknesses, and even our sins are not obstacles to reaching heaven — our crosses will not stop us from rising toward heaven.

The Cross we carry in life can also be the Cross that brings us home.

Oremus!

In silence, we place ourselves before the Poong Hesus Nazareno.

Walk with us each day.

Carry us when the road feels heavy.

Guide our steps, our choices, and our actions.

May everything we do lead us closer to You,
until we reach the Kingdom of Heaven,
our true home.

Amen.

VIVA POONG JESUS NAZARENO!

Pit Señor, sa Marikeños Kini!

1-22-2026

Sto. Niño

Last Sunday, January 18, 2026, we celebrated the feast of the Child Jesus - our Señor Santo Niño. This devotion is very close to us because it is also a gift of faith for us Filipinos. When Magellan discovered the Philippines and introduced Catholicism to us, he gave us the image of the Santo Niño. It's right and just to celebrate this feast with great joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, in the image of a child.

As I continue my seminary formation here in Silang, I am still counting my many first experiences, including this first experience of Sinulog for the Feast of Santo Niño here at Saint Paul Seminary. The Holy Eucharist was presided by Rev. Fr. Ronel together with Fr. Pete. After the Mass, a short procession follows going to the facade of the seminary for the traditional Sinulog prayer petitions, offered in honor of the Santo Niño, and for the blessing of the people. We had "taho" and "pandesal" for breakfast together with the community after the Sinulog.

As I continue my day, I've seen live updates from Marikina for the feast of the Señor Santo Niño de Marikina. The Marikina PIO Facebook page was also covering the Fiesta happenings of Señor Santo Niño de Marikina that was from Santo Niño Chapel that is under my home parish - Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados de Marikina. It was also recently declared as City's Official Titular Image of Señor Santo Niño de Marikina; it was believed that his Chapel was standing as early as 1899.

We have Señor Santo Niño de Marikina, Señor Santo Niño de Cebu, Señor Santo Niño de Tondo, and so on. Despite the many and different titles of Santo Niño we have, one thing we can't deny, once in a while, our Lord became a child - innocent, playful, adventurous, curious. Our Lord took the form of a child, a human being, to grow like a human, do such things as human, to be like us and yet so unlike us, everything and anything like us except for sins.

God's Greatness

The Gospel of Matthew reminds us that God, despite being great, powerful, and almighty, He humbles himself like a child. A challenge for us, a human being, to be much humble, and be like a child. Jesus being in a form of child emptied Himself, despite being a God. Jesus affirmed and expressed what the Father's will.

Jesus showed us examples to follow on. His trust to the will of God - obediently accepting it, even death on a Cross. His humility emptying Himself - humbleness urges us to follow the will of the Father. And last, like a child's thankful heart, a thanksgiving heart - "walang hanggang pasasalamat" to our Father who is always good to us.

God's greatness never changes, in the image of Christ in human being, in the image of suffering Christ (Poong Jesus Nazareno), in the image of glorified Christ (Risen Christ), even in a child's smallness (Santo Niño).

The Taste of the World

2-12-2026

Salt and Light

“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” - Matthew 5:13-16. These are the words of our Gospel this Sunday in 5th Week in Ordinary Time. The reminder of our past Gospels episodes is for us to be holy, extra ordinary holy this season of Ordinary Time.

Yet something extraordinary happened last week that we still hear in the news today for the continuation of the investigation. Last week, we were shaken by the news of a college student who fell at LRT-1 Fernando Poe Jr. Station. The videos circulated online quickly and were also covered by the many media outlets. Many speculations also spread, faster than the investigation.

In a matter of minutes, the incident became trending content. It has been shared, reposted, and commented on, and was debated. Some expressed concern. Some joked. Some judged. Some just scrolled it.

In the midst of this, Senator Robin Padilla raised a controversial statement regarding mental health, saying that this is not existing in their time. We must take it seriously. Whether we agree with him or not. Mental health is not an imaginary issue, mental problems are true. It is not a drama. It is not a weakness. It is a silent battle many people fight, especially youths navigating pressure, expectations, identity, family concerns, financial struggles, and the noise of social media.

This is a reality, we must pray with this reality. Understanding this reality the Gospel interrupts us saying “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” Jesus does not say, “You should try to be.” He says, “You are.” But what does that mean in a world where everything is issue and viral? In the digital world where algorithms decide what we see and sometimes what we feel, what we fear, what we agree and disagree, and worst, who we should

be?

The World Has a Taste

Salt, in the time of Jesus, was not decoration. It is preserved. It was purified. It gave flavor. Without salt, food spoils. Without light, people stumble. Today, our world has a taste. And often, it tastes bitter, mockery, indifference, for engagement, performative concern, and such. In the digital world, it is easy to lose flavor. We become bland observers or, worse, corrosive voices. **If salt loses its taste, Jesus says, it is thrown out. This is not just about morality. It is about identity. When we forget who we are, we lose our flavor.**

The recent incident at the LRT station confronts us with a question:

When someone falls, literally or figuratively, what is our response?

Do we record?

Do we ridicule?

Do we remain neutral?

Or do we respond as salt and light as the Gospel told us?

Mental Health and the Hidden Darkness

Mental health struggles are often invisible. The smiling classmate may be drowning in anxiety. The achiever may be battling depression. The quiet one may be carrying trauma. Light does not shame darkness. It reveals and heals.

To be light in our Gospel means: Listening without judging. Converting and renewing all to kindness, to goodness, to love. Giving sentiments and considering mental health. Recognizing that faith and psychological help are not enemies.

I believe grace builds on our nature as we always have the capacity to be good. God works through counselors, doctors, friends, and communities. To say “just pray” without offering concrete support is to just to hide the problem.

The Digital World: Where Flavor Is Tested

As communication students I am, we are being taught to create content but as Christians, we are called to create meaningful content. The digital world is not neutral. It forms us. It trains our reactions. It shapes our desires. It can amplify our empathy or cruelty.

To be tasteful salt in the digital world means: Posting not for clout, but for clarity and compassion. Refusing to share unverified information. Avoiding jokes that dehumanize someone's pain. Using captions that uplift rather than humiliate. Checking on friends privately instead of performing concern publicly. ***Light online means transparency, authenticity, and responsibility. It means remembering that behind every trending topic is a human person made in the image of God.***

Lenten Thoughts

2-26-2026

Christmas-Lent

Time flies really fast. Imagine, Christmas is just like yesterday and tomorrow Holy Week will start. From preparing for the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ during the season of Advent, to preparing for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in these 40 days of the season of Lent. We await the peak of the celebration of our faith, the Paschal Mystery of our Lord Jesus Christ, his passion, death, and resurrection.

We just began the season of Lent last Wednesday. During Ash Wednesday we impose ashes on our foreheads, not just to dirt ourselves but to be a sign for us, reminding us to repent and believe in the gospel. As we begin this season of Lent we fast, abstain, and almsgiving. We sacrifice as our Lord suffered for our sake.

Temptation of Jesus

In our gospel episode last Sunday in the first week of lent, after Jesus fasted for 40 days. Jesus, a true God and true man was tempted by the devil, tempted as humans like us in the desert. Thus the lent always invites us into the desert, not the scenic landscape of sand, but our inner wilderness of our solitude hearts. Jesus encounters temptation, amidst hunger and struggles, he did not fall into a sin. Each time, he confronted temptation by referencing into scriptures, always trusting God's words. He resists temptation not by avoiding his human nature but by embracing it with the obedience to the will of the Father, as also the source of his strength. Lenten season's first call to us is to be dependent on God, following his words and will that affirms our true freedom, avoiding us in the near occasions of sins.

Followed by this, Monday in the First Week of Lent, shifts from personal battle to temptations to communal accountability. "Walang sinuman ang nabubuhay para sa sarili lamang. Walang sinuman ang namamatay para sa sarili lamang. Tayong lahat ay may

pananagutan sa isa't isa." As the song "Pananagutan" says, Jesus told us that "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least of your brethren, you did for me." We have also this in our Filipino term "gawin mo sa iyong kapwa ang gusto mong gawin sayo, huwag mong gawin ang ayaw mong gawin sayo." It teaches us that on judgment day, what matters is not our beliefs, what we know, how much catechesis, theology we know, but to the truth that is we care for each one of us especially to the least. The second call of the lenten season for us is to love, serve, care for everyone, not just for God's sake. Our salvation is not our personal redemption but by Jesus who suffered into the Cross. In this we are invited to sacrifice in solidarity with those who are suffering, a very lent design of us to fast, to abstain, and to almsgiving. To feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothed the naked, visit the imprisoned, and such.

Philippine Relevance

While still savoring these readings and invitations of the season of lent to us. It is really hits different to our country nowadays. The desert is not just in our inner hearts, not just confined to our personal spiritual disciplines, but also to us as a whole community, as people of God. This week, our former president, Rodrigo Duterte stood before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague as the judges and persecutors confirmed his charges of alleged crimes against humanity linked to our country's controversial "war on drugs" during his presidency. Prosecutors allege systematic killings under his leadership, and the current confirmation proceedings will decide if the case goes to trial, marking a significant moment in international justice and accountability, and especially for the loved ones of the victims of bloody war on drugs. As we also commemorate the 40th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution during the martial law of former president Ferdinand Marcos, Sr. that also claimed many innocent lives.

The 40th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution is a moment we celebrate as the triumph of dignity over dictatorship, of democracy over fear. But amidst commemorations of EDSA 40th, it has been still trying to revolutionise our history. I realize its meaning up to now, the year 2026. It asks ourselves if we truly learn to stand with the people especially the vulnerable ones, or have we tolerated systems that forget them? Does our memory of People Power include the real victims, the poor, the persecuted, and the marginalized? Or has it become nostalgia just for the clout, comfortable and unexamined content creating? I believe those "naulila" are still seeking justice and healing. Thus it is for us

to be extra compassionate, understanding, and sensitive towards all.

Christ is the Essence

Fasting, abstinence, and almsgiving is nonsense if we do not do it for Christ, if we do not see Christ to our neighbors. Love for God is not separable from love for our neighbors, especially those usually forgotten by our society. Lenten season is not just a season to be lent, these exercises are an ongoing commitment for us to embody truth, justice, and mercy in every breath and action. This is how we resist temptation. This is how we respond to the happenings of our times, and this is how we live as both disciples and prophets in our time.